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Research Philosophy

As an educator I take pride in teaching as a professional practice. Teaching is a scholarly activity when it is purposeful, reflective, documented, and shared in an evaluative forum (Menges & Weimer, 1996). The combination of teaching experience, leadership development, and passion toward instructional technology provides me with an opportunity to become a change agent in the school, the district, and nationally.

Research is an important part of my reflective practices as a teacher. This year I have focused on researching technology integration, creating change in schools, and understanding the standards related to distance education and online learning. By researching these interests I am better prepared to integrate 21st Century Skills with content standards. I am able to mentor and encourage others to use best practices in integration plans, and to make scholarly, sound decisions as a committee member and leader for my district.

My interests in distance and online learning directs my attention toward further research to gain qualitative and quantitative data on best practices of instructional design and teacher pedagogy. Through research I have found an abundance of data comparing face to face classes with online classes and information describing the types of learners currently successful in online environments. However, I have noted a need for further research in ways to design lessons that capitalize on technology and the unique type of social presence existent in online environments.

Support and direction for online learning can be hindered by the lack of empirical data. By providing research using quantitative methods schools and districts will be able to make data-driven decisions providing access to the highest quality of education for all learners regardless of location.

Reference

Menges, R.J. & Weimer, M. (1996). *Teaching on solid ground. Using scholarship to improve practice.* San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.